



PRESS RELEASE – Sept. 1, 2015

Communications: 972-624-3104

City outlines steps taken to investigate high water bills

THE COLONY, Texas — In response to numerous concerns received by customers regarding recent elevated water bills, the city wishes to convey the steps it has taken to seek an explanation.

“We take these concerns very seriously and have undertaken a complete analysis of our meter-reading and billing systems,” City Manager Troy Powell said. “This analysis is not totally complete at this point but we wanted to share the steps we have taken so far and what we have found.”

1. We have examined if the meters were incorrectly read low last month and then corrected this month. This could be a possibility but based on the large number of complaints it is not likely.

2. We examined a section of meters from homes with high readings to make sure the meters are functioning correctly. All meters tested were working correctly. This included meters that are hand-read and the automated meters.

3. We looked at our internal billing process as well as our third-party billing provider. All formulas and functions are working correctly. There have been no changes made to the billing system in the last several months. Some homes did not see any increase in usage which also helps eliminate a system-wide billing issue.

4. We made sure that all accounts which illustrated higher-than-normal usage were read and not estimated.

5. There have not been any rate increases since October 2014. That rate increase was 3 percent.

6. There have been no large scale meter replacements or reprogramming in the last year.

7. Many of our neighbor cities are experiencing the same concerns from their water customers. We have been in frequent contact with them as they go through the same processes we are.

Some additional factors that could lead to higher water usage than normal for this billing period include a slightly longer-than-normal billing period, which included some of July and some of August. Also, August of 2014 was extremely wet, with the City receiving over 4 inches of rain while August 2015 was the driest since 2010. DFW recorded rainfall 3 days out of the month with a total under 1/2 inch.

How we can help you!

- We will come out to your home or business and check your meter for proper function and go over current/past years' usage.
- We will check for any leaks that could be on the customer side of the meter.
- We can show you how to see sprinkler system usage and calculate it for the month.
- We would be happy to come and present to any HOAs or associations that would like to go over the billing system and how it works.
- We can make payment arrangements for anyone having issues paying their bill.
- We will gladly make adjustments if we find any errors with meter reading or billing.

To take advantage of any of these services, please contact our Customer Service Department at 972-624-3100.

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